

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

105th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 199

July 23, 1997, 6:57 pm
Page S-7930 Temp. Record

AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS/Market Access Program Limitations

SUBJECT: Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1998 . . . S. 1033.
Cochran motion to table the Bryan amendment No. 970.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 59-40

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1033, the Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1998, will provide \$50.685 billion in new budget authority, 73 percent of which will be for mandatory spending programs and 75 percent of which will be for food welfare programs (both mandatory and discretionary).

The Bryan amendment would cap funding for the Market Access Program (MAP) at \$70 million, would prohibit MAP funds from going to foreign corporations (as defined in section 9 of the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 3508)), and would prohibit MAP funds from going to the Mink Export Development Council or any mink industry trade association. (In the Farm Bill enacted last Congress (see 104th Congress, second session, vote No 57) funding was capped at \$90 million annually, aid to foreign corporations was permanently banned, and aid was permanently limited to cooperatives, trade associations, and small businesses. This bill will continue a ban started last year on providing MAP assistance to the Mink Export Development Council or any mink industry trade association.)

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Cochran moved to table the Bryan amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

Over the last several years the Senate has held numerous debates on the Market Access Program (see: 103d Congress, first session, vote No. 214; 103d Congress, second session, vote No. 206; 104th Congress, first session, vote Nos. 130, 440, and 449; and 104th Congress, second session, vote Nos. 14 and 236). As a result of those debates, Senators are very familiar with the details of

(See other side)

YEAS (59)			NAYS (40)		NOT VOTING (1)	
Republicans (37 or 67%)		Democrats (22 or 50%)	Republicans (18 or 33%)	Democrats (22 or 50%)	Republicans (0)	Democrats (1)
Bennett	Inhofe	Akaka	Abraham	Bingaman		Biden ⁻²
Bond	Jeffords	Baucus	Allard	Bryan		
Burns	Kempthorne	Boxer	Ashcroft	Bumpers		
Campbell	Lott	Breaux	Brownback	Byrd		
Chafee	Mack	Cleland	Coats	Dodd		
Cochran	McConnell	Conrad	D'Amato	Feingold		
Collins	Murkowski	Daschle	DeWine	Glenn		
Coverdell	Roberts	Dorgan	Faircloth	Hollings		
Craig	Santorum	Durbin	Grams	Johnson		
Domenici	Sessions	Feinstein	Gregg	Kennedy		
Enzi	Shelby	Ford	Hutchinson	Kerry		
Frist	Smith, Gordon	Graham	Kyl	Kohl		
Gorton	Snowe	Harkin	Lugar	Lautenberg		
Gramm	Specter	Inouye	McCain	Lieberman		
Grassley	Stevens	Kerrey	Nickles	Mikulski		
Hagel	Thomas	Landrieu	Roth	Moynihan		
Hatch	Thurmond	Leahy	Smith, Bob	Reed		
Helms	Warner	Levin	Thompson	Reid		
Hutchison		Moseley-Braun		Robb		
		Murray		Rockefeller		
		Sarbanes		Torricelli		
		Wyden		Wellstone		

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

the program and with the arguments both for and against it. Senators know that the United States has a net trade surplus in agricultural products of \$20 billion annually; they know that the Agriculture Department reports that every \$1 spent on the program returns \$2 to \$7 to the economy; they know that the products that benefit from this program are typically grown on the West Coast and in the South, and that a lot less is spent on promoting them than is spent on promoting grain exports; and they know that all grant recipients are selected not to promote their specific products but to promote the sale of U.S. agricultural goods that are used in their products. Further, they know that the program was amended in the Farm Bill last Congress (see vote No. 57) to prohibit grants from going to foreign corporations or big American corporations, and to cap, and set, the amount of money to be spent annually on the program. Few small programs have been debated as exhaustively as the MAP. Even the name has been changed twice to accommodate our colleagues' concerns.

The changes that were made were made to accommodate the opponents of this program. In brief, those Senators who oppose the MAP do not think that the Federal Government should be involved in helping agricultural producers market their products. The main reasons they have given are that they think that the money goes to big rich companies that do not need any help, and to foreign companies that should not get any help. They have argued that companies like McDonalds have received MAP funds; we have responded that McDonalds and similar companies have received funds to use American agricultural products in their overseas stores, and to advertise that they were using those superior products instead of cheaper, inferior foreign goods. Similarly, we argued that aid that went to foreign companies was to expand foreign markets for U.S. agricultural goods used by those companies. Though our colleagues' arguments were invalid, we responded to them by simply prohibiting large companies and foreign companies from receiving funds. The program is so weakly funded that there are more than enough deserving small businesses and trade groups to use the \$90 million that the Farm Bill mandated as the annual amount to be appropriated. Our trading partners do not have the same difficulty in discerning the benefits of promoting trade. For instance, the European Union will spend \$10.11 billion this year advertising European products; in fact, it will spend more promoting European white wine alone than the United States will spend on promoting all of its products.

With this background we turn to the Bryan amendment. First, it would find fault with the Agriculture Department's definition of a foreign company. In the past, our colleagues complained that around \$10 million per year went to foreign companies to promote U.S. agricultural goods. Now they are reduced to complaining that hundreds of thousands of dollars, out of \$90 million, go to companies that by their definition are foreign-owned. Second, the amendment would cut funding to \$70 million. While it is true that the Senate voted to cut funding to that level before, the final compromise amount that was agreed to on the Farm Bill for annual funding was \$90 million. Just 1 year later our colleagues want to break the compromise. Third, the amendment would ban support for mink exports. The bill before us already has a provision to bar using funds from this Act to promote such exports. The idea is not so good that it has to be included twice. Our colleagues need to learn how to take "yes" for an answer. Their concerns with the MAP have been fully addressed; now they are just nitpicking. We urge our colleagues to reject this amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

We have worked for years to eliminate the Market Access Program, aka the Market Promotion Program, aka the Targeted Export Assistance Program. With remarkable resilience it has kept coming back to life under new names. Last Congress we tried a more modest approach--instead of killing the beast, we proposed wounding it. The compromise was accepted. The Senate agreed to limit funding to \$70 million and to bar foreign companies and large companies from participating. The rationale was that if we were going to give this type of outrageous corporate welfare to companies, they should at least be American companies and they at least should not be huge, obscenely wealthy companies. Unfortunately, the Farm Bill came back from conference with an extra \$20 million in spending for the MAP, and this year we find out that the Foreign Agricultural Service, which administers the program, has a strange new definition of what constitutes a foreign company. This year, the MAP has given taxpayer funds to companies in the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, and Saudi Arabia. The Bryan amendment would correct both of these problems. It would cut funding back to the \$70 million that the Senate has already gone on record as supporting, and it would make the Foreign Agricultural Service use an existing Agriculture Department definition of foreign company rather than its new bizarre definition. We would much rather eliminate this corporate welfare program altogether, but we have offered this compromise amendment instead. We urge Senators to vote against the motion to table it.